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Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SP-02 AF-10 EUR-12 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 HA-05 MCT-01
ACDA-12 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /111 W
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O R 132140Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8442
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMCONSUL BELIZE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

S E C R E T SAN SALVADOR 3017

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XA, CU, UR, MPOL, ES
SUBJECT: SALVADORAN REACTION TO SOVIET AND
CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 148740

1. IN A JUNE 13 TALK WITH ROBERTO ANDINO, DIRECTOR OF
AMERICAN AFFAIRS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, ADCM AND POLITICAL/
LABOR OFFICER RAISED POINTS IN REFTEL. EMPHASIZING THAT HE
WAS SPEAKING ONLY FOR HIMSELF AND NOT FOR THE GOES, ANDINO
SAID THAT IT WAS HARD FOR HIM TO HAVE DEFINITE OPINIONS ON
THE MATTER OF CUBAN INTERVENTION IN AFRICA IN VIEW OF WHAT
HE PERCEIVED AS THE SPLIT ON THE ISSUE WITHIN THE STATE
DEPARTMENT BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE AND AMBASSADOR
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ANDREW YOUNG. HE SPECIFICALLY
REFERRED TO WHAT HE SAID WERE YOUNG'S PREVIOUS
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STATEMENTS THAT CUBAN TROOPS WERE PERFORMING A
"CIVILIZING MISSION" IN AFRICA. ANDINO ALSO POINTED
TO THE CONTROVERSY THAT HE SAID HAD RECENTLY ERUPTED
BETWEEN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND THE U.S. CONGRESS
OVER THE EXTENT OF CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE RECENT
INVASION OF ZAIRE FROM ANGOLAN TERRITORY.

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2. ANDINO STATED THAT IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE VIEWS OF OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES ON THE ISSUE. HE SAID THAT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, THE MATTER SHOULD BE LEFT UP TO THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU). ANDINO ADDED THAT DEPENDING ON THE AFRICAN COUNTRY IN WHICH THEY HAPPENED TO BE STATIONED OR THE TYPE OF CONFLICT THEY HAPPENED TO BE INVOLVED IN, THE CUBAN TROOPS WERE SEEN BY SOME AFRICANS AS "HEROES" AND BY OTHERS AS "AGGRESSORS." HE IMPLIED THAT SINCE AFRICAN NATIKRI THEMSELVES DID NOT HAVE A FIRM CONSENSUS ON THE ISSUE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA, LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS COULD HARLY BE EXPECTED TO HAVE SUCH A CONSENSUS.

3. WHEN ASKED BY EMBOFFS IF THERE WAS ANY CONCERN IN LATIN AMERICA THAT THE MILITARY CAPABILITIES DISPLAYED BY THE CUBANS IN AFRICA MIGHT SOMEDAY BE APPLIED TO LATIN AMERICA, ANDINO REPLIED THAT HE HAD HEARD SOME SPECULATION TO THE EFFECT THAT CUBAV MILITARY ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE ASKED FOR BY BELIZE IF GUATEMALA ASSUMED A MORE THREATENING STANCE. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IF THIS OCCURRED, CUBA WOULD RUN INTO SOLID DIPLOMATIC AND OTHER RESISTANCE FROM CENTRAL AMERICAN NATIONS AND LATIN AMERICA AS A WHOLE. ANDINO ADDED THAT HE THOUGHT CUBAN LEADER FIDEL ASTRO KNEW BETTER THAN TO RISK SUCH A REACTION AND WOULD NOT USE HIS MILITARY FORCES IN ANY PART OF LATIN AMERICA WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF JAMAICA TO BUTTRESS THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT.
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4. FINALLY, ANDINO FELT THAT CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA WERE A POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE ISSUE AMONG LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, BUT THAT THEY WERE NOT NEARLY AS IMPORTANT AN ISSUE TO LATIN AMERICA AS MORE PRESSING REGIONAL MATTERS.
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